

# Drugs: Guidance for schools



Summary for Headteachers and Governors

department for  
**education and skills**





***Drugs: Guidance for Schools*** replaces existing DfES guidance to schools, *Circular 4/95: Drug Prevention and Schools* and *Protecting Young People: good practice in drug education in schools and the youth service* (1998).

It provides guidance on all matters relating to drug education, the management of drugs within the school community, supporting the needs of pupils with regard to drugs and drug policy development. The document defines drugs as including alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs, as well as medicines and volatile substances.





It outlines the important role schools play in tackling drug misuse in England, by providing drug education and pastoral support to all pupils and identifying those vulnerable to drug misuse so that pupils who need extra help either receive it in school or through referral to other services.



### **Who the guidance applies to**

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It applies to primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) in England.



### **Who the guidance is for**

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All staff, particularly senior managers, the person responsible for coordinating drug issues within the school and staff who teach drug education.

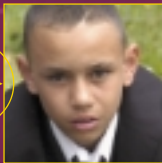


## Key Messages

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All schools should have a drug education programme which is developmental and appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of pupils. It should cover, as a minimum, the statutory elements included in the National Curriculum Science Order for each Key Stage.

- Drug education should be delivered as part of PSHE and citizenship and is most effective when supported by a whole school approach.
- Drug education should cover all drugs and, when appropriate, should focus on drugs of particular significance to pupils such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, volatile substances and Class A drugs.
- The programme should be based on pupils' views and build on their existing knowledge and understanding.
- Drug education should be taught by skilled and confident teachers.



All schools should have a drug policy which sets out the school's role in relation to all drug matters – both the content and organisation of drug education, and the management of drugs within school boundaries.

- Schools should appoint a designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all drug issues within the school.
- The drug policy should be developed in consultation with the whole school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and partner agencies.

All schools should have agreed a range of responses and procedures for managing drug incidents, which are understood by all members of the school community, and documented within the drug policy.

- Schools should make clear that the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within school boundaries is unacceptable.
- Schools and police should establish an agreed policy which clarifies roles and mutual expectations before incidents occur.



All school staff should receive drug awareness training, understand the school's drug policy and their role in implementing the policy.

- Senior managers should ensure that staff have access to high-quality support and continuing professional development opportunities.

Schools should ensure that pupils vulnerable to drug misuse are identified and receive appropriate support either from within the school or through referral to other services.

- Schools should be aware of and establish clear referral protocols with the range of relevant agencies providing support to pupils vulnerable to drug misuse.





## Actions

Headteachers will want to:

- review existing drug education provision in the school
- review or develop the school's drug policy consulting staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils
- consider whether the needs of vulnerable young people are being identified and if appropriate links have been made with relevant agencies
- consider staff training and support needs.



## Guidance



### Curriculum Standards

KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4

Headteachers, Chairs of  
Governors, LEAs

Status: recommended action

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### More information

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*Drugs: Guidance for Schools* please contact DfES publications

**Tel:** 0845 602 2260 quoting reference 0112/2004 (summary) 0092/2004  
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